U.S. Department of Education
2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) [] Charter [**X**] Title I [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Julianne Phelps

Official School Name: Dr. Robert Brown Middle School

School Mailing Address:
980 Durham Road
Madison, CT 06443-1843

County: New Haven County State School Code Number*: 766

Telephone: (203) 245-6400 Fax: (203) 245-6425

Web site/URL: www.brownmiddleschool.org E-mail: phelpsj@madison.k12.ct.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. David Klein

District Name: Madison Tel: (203) 245-6300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Becky Coffey

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2004.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: (per district designation)

3	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
2	Middle/Junior high schools
1	High schools
0	K-12 schools
6	**TOTAL**

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 11392

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

[ ] Urban or large central city
[ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
[X] Suburban
[ ] Small city or town in a rural area
[ ] Rural

4. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	**6**	148	154	302
K			0	**7**			0
1			0	**8**			0
2			0	**9**			0
3			0	**10**			0
4			0	**11**			0
5	156	129	285	**12**			0
		TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL					587

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
4 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
2 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
93 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	**Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 0 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	3
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	587
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.005
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0.511

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 1 %

Total number limited English proficient 3

Number of languages represented: 2

Specify languages:

French and Portuguese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3 %

Total number students who qualify: 19

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

Total Number of Students Served: 53

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

5	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	15	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	21	Specific Learning Disability
2	Emotional Disturbance	6	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
3	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	2	0
Classroom teachers	38	11
Special resource teachers/specialists	8	4
Paraprofessionals	16	0
Support staff	2	3
Total number	66	18

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 **14 :1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	99%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	4%	7%	6%	12%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total		%

PART III - SUMMARY

At Dr. Robert H. Brown Middle School (RHB), we focus on preparing our students to become citizens of the global community. Each year we set a theme which we alternate year to year. One is based on a quote from Gandhi's: "Be the Change You Wish to See in the World," and the second is "Leave It Better," a phrase coined by one of our faculty members. Not only are these themes woven into the instructional process, but also into our outreach activities in the community and beyond. Our goal is to raise students' awareness of their role in the world while guiding them towards becoming active participants in making it better.

RHB students benefit from a strong sense of school connections, an academic program that is diverse and rigorous, and a community that supports its schools and values education. Situated in a shoreline town on Long Island Sound in southern Connecticut, Brown School's mission reads in part, "…With a collaborative effort among school, family, and community, we will expect increased independence and hold students accountable to models of behavior that encourage core values promoting empathy and responsibility." This mission guides our work with young adolescents and gives purpose to our programs.

To support student academic, social, and emotional well-being, RHB teachers meet daily in interdisciplinary teams and weekly as departments. During this time, teachers plan instruction, share strategies, monitor progress, and coordinate units of study for optimal benefit to students. Grade level teams consist of four core teachers and a special education teacher. Our students are also supported by a school social worker, school counselor, psychologist, and because of a partnership with the local agency, Madison Youth Services, RHB also has another social worker as a result of a collaborative grant. In addition to the core subjects, RHB students participate in daily Spanish class, physical education, computers, art, health, and a performing art elective (chorus, band, orchestra, or theatre).

Academic support outside the classroom is provided by a reading and a math specialist. Students benefit from academic, social, or emotional support based on teacher referrals through our Student Support Team (SST). This multidisciplinary team meets to review referrals, support teachers through collaboration and consultation, and ultimately to recommend additional supports if necessary.

Classes at RHB are heterogeneously grouped and teachers are trained to meet diverse needs through differentiated instructional practices. To provide curricular interests beyond the school day, RHB provides an after school intramural athletic and academic school club program. These offerings provide students the opportunity to participate in programs such as basketball, field hockey, volleyball, cross-country, newspaper, literary magazine, science explorers, origami, drama club, chess, book groups, environmental club, and more. All of these activities are coached by RHB teachers who engage in these activities as a way to share their personal interests and connect with students in a venue outside of the classroom.

RHB students, with the help of student council, teachers, and community members, engage in several activities to demonstrate citizenship and world awareness. Our students annually participate in a holiday "Adopt a Family" tradition in which each of our twenty-six homerooms adopts a family from a nearby urban area and buys gifts for these families in need. Our students have undertaken community service projects to provide wells and water for countries in Africa, collected donations for Leukemia patients in our Pennies for Patients drive, designed school spirit days where donations are collected for local charities, and most recently, a coin drive was initiated by students to support people in Haiti. No matter the challenge, RHB students have always found time and ways to help their local community and those less fortunate in the world.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

Our state's standardized test is the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). Student achievement is reported at the following levels: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, Goal, and Advanced. The current format of the test is Generation 4. Within the reporting period required in this application, only Generation 4 results are reported. The State Department of Education has suggested that direct comparisons between Generation 3 and 4 may not be valid. Additionally, the CMTs were moved from a fall administration (September), to a spring date (March) with Generation 4. Additional State Assessment Data are available at www.ctreports.com.

At the start of the school year, administration and teaching faculty analyze CMT data received over the summer. We meet as a staff—divided into teams, departments, and grade levels—to plan goals and interventions aimed at addressing specific deficiencies in student performance. These teams include special education teachers and our reading and math specialists. The review and analysis of this data has evolved over the past three years.

On this test, most of our students, including our students receiving special education services, consistently perform at or above the proficient range. In mathematics in grade 5, the level of students scoring at proficient or above has been at or above 93% for all four years. In grade 6, results have been at or above 94% for four years of CMT administration.

Our students in special education also perform well, though not to the same levels as the general population. This is an area in which we continue to examine results and revise practices. Grade 5 special education student scores at proficient and above over four years have fluctuated, with a high of 83% in 2007 to a low of 54% in 2009. It should be noted the number of special education students has decreased from 45 students in 2005 to the current number of 26 in grade 5. In grade 6, this range has been 58% in 2006 to a high of 91% in 2008. Similarly, the number of special education students has steadily decreased from a high of 41 students to a current low of 30 students. We also understand that because of the small size of our special education population, mathematics and reading performance are subject to fluctuation from year to year.

Our reading achievement on the CMTs has shown consistent results in grade 6. In 2006, 91% of all grade 6 students scored proficient or above and the most recent test results from 2009 show 99% scoring at that level. In grade 5, over 90% of all students have scored proficient or above for all years. Our special education student data shows that in both grades, there is fluctuation from year to year vs. a consistent increase. Reviewing this data with core teachers and special education teachers has led to a renewed focus on CMT reading strands for our struggling readers. Because most of our special education students have identified disabilities in the area of reading, we have added several research based reading programs to our program. With a new focus on data and progress monitoring, our staff now have the data needed to more quickly identify specific deficits and address those in supplemental study center sessions. Our language arts and math programs have improved the alignment of curriculum among teachers, using common and benchmark assessments to measure students' growth and differentiate within heterogeneous groups.

In Connecticut, schools are classified by District Reference Groups (DRGs) which are based on seven data indicators considering socioeconomic status, family need, and enrollment. CMT scores are reported by DRG. Madison is one of 21 districts in DRG B. With one of the lowest per pupil expenditures in DRG B, Madison students consistently outperform similar districts on the CMTs. These results are possible because of the commitment and expertise of the RHB teaching staff.

Progress report and report card grades also provide important data for assessment of academic progress as well as students' overall performance. In the first trimester of the school year 2009-2010, 83% of students earned a place on the school honor roll, based on the district criteria. This percentage is consistent across trimesters and year to year.

For students who struggle to maintain consistent performance, we utilize the SST process. This team of teachers, administrators, and support staff reviews teacher data-based referrals and identifies additional needs for support. Our goal is to identify that which is keeping students from achieving and to provide the supports necessary to address the deficits.

At RHB, working with student performance information does not end in July when results are sent to schools. In August, CMT scores are shared with teachers and after reviewing the results, staff responds to the findings with revised instruction and specific plans for students. Data-driven decision-making has become part of our teaching practice; teachers now house their data on a common school network drive and compare their results with standardized scores. Staff can now make predictions as well as measure the impact of effective teaching.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

The faculty at RHB works together at the team, grade, and department levels to analyze data throughout the year. This data is used to develop curriculum and interventions for all students. CMT results are reviewed at the beginning of the school year and used in conjunction with benchmark assessments to identify entry level performances for each student. Common assessments are also used to provide specific curriculum-based information for differentiation in the classroom. In 2005-2006, our CMT results showed lowered reading comprehension scores with open-ended responses. We used this data to revise our strategies for reading instruction. The staff participated in professional development using Nancy Boyles' strategies to increase students' reading comprehension. In 2006-2007, our CMT scores reflected the positive impact of this shift in our practices. The 2008-2009 CMT results showed lowered performance in writing. Currently, our language arts classes are addressing this by using more differentiation in writing, as well as increased editing and revising practices. Skill groups have been formulated to provide specific interventions in reading and writing.

The math curriculum is assessed using similar processes. CMT data is segregated by strand to assess strengths and weaknesses across both grade levels. Students receive interventions based upon the results of the CMTs, pretests, benchmark, and common assessments. Lessons are frequently altered to adapt to the needs of all of the students.

Collectively, this data provides the faculty many opportunities to increase student achievement while guiding our instructional practices. Our goal is for all students to meet mastery of the curriculum. We use our formative and summative data to drive our instruction. If a student has not met with success, our 3-tier model of intervention process begins. Reading and math specialists use Scientifically Research Based Interventions (SRBI) to re-teach concepts and monitor progress using in-district data warehousing software. This SRBI data is integrated with our common assessments to improve our curriculum and instruction in fifth and sixth grade.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

At RHB, communicating assessment data is one way that we build effective partnerships among teachers, parents, students, and the community. CMT results are sent to the school by the state. District personnel mail those results to the families and reach out to parents to help them interpret and make use of that data. CMT data are also disaggregated and shared among school staff to target those students in need of intervention and to guide instruction for all. Results are published in the newspaper and presented at Board of Education meetings which are televised.

Teachers administer several benchmark assessments that focus on CMT skills, as well as common assessments within subject areas. Teachers track the results of benchmark and common assessments so they can identify trends and use that data to better inform instruction and intervention.

Parents receive progress reports every thirty days in the trimester model. Teachers generally require parents to sign major assessments to make sure that parents are aware of their child's progress. Throughout the year, teachers regularly call, email, and conference with parents to review and to discuss student progress. Parents are also welcome to voice their concerns to teachers and to request a conference. RHB is piloting a new computer system that will allow parents to log in directly to view their child's grades. At meetings to review a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan, teachers and support service personnel use standardized forms that include detailed assessment data.

Because assessments are both formative and summative, teachers use several tools to make sure students and parents know the content, intent, and nature of assessments. Teachers use their websites to post information, helpful links, and class reminders. Across the subject areas, teachers employ detailed rubrics so that students and their parents know the requirements of any given assessment.

4. **Sharing Success:**

We share our success with other schools within and beyond our community. This communication allows us increased opportunities to share our knowledge and learn from the successes of others.
Each year, RHB students visit the nearby elementary school to read with younger children. Some students have their artwork on display at the administration building and the town library for public viewing. Students are recognized by their team and by administrators on a monthly basis for the growth they have made and the success they have experienced. At monthly meetings, the Board of Education recognizes students for the contributions they have made to the school and community.

The Parent Teacher Organization collaborates with the staff to highlight the work of students. Several times per year, students have received broader recognition for their work at Brown School through the local newspapers and the local news channels. A school newsletter is published quarterly which highlights the success of students and is posted on our school website.

In 2008, RHB hosted a team of teachers from throughout New England to observe our school for several days as part of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process. RHB is one of only three middle schools in the state to receive accreditation from NEASC.

Our Secretary of State, Susan Bysiewicz, and Attorney General, Richard Blumenthal, spoke to our students about the importance of participating in all facets of government and encouraged them to share their thoughts and initiate discussion with their families about the election. In the time of a historic election, this was a fantastic experience for students to share their school and learn from local dignitaries.

Parents are welcome to observe and participate in special activities such as the Ellis Island simulation, music concerts, and field day. Members of our community have been invited to take a guided tour of our school, allowing them to view and celebrate the students' accomplishments that are achieved on a daily basis. RHB has hosted a community outreach day for members of the community to observe the programs, resources, and students at Brown School.

If selected as a Blue Ribbon School, our dedicated staff and students look forward to continuing to share our successes within our community and beyond.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that instruction is aligned with state and national standards and assessments while allowing each teacher to exercise creativity and innovation. The curriculum cycle is ongoing, and assessment data informs the instructional content and methodology. RHB's instructional program includes four core academics, daily world language, special education, technology, art, music, theater, health, and physical education. Expectations at RHB are rigorous but well supported. RHB benefits from program coordinators in language arts, math, science, social studies, and special education who provide curriculum support and expertise and who supervise instructional delivery at the classroom level. These coordinators work at both district middle schools to ensure the sequence of instruction remains relevant and cohesive.

The English curriculum is based on the belief that reading and writing are portals to understanding the self and vehicles to excel in the world. Essential questions guide the study of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and studies connect to previous years' content while forming the basis for success in subsequent years. This scaffolding ensures student progression and provides continuity of instruction through a unified scope and sequence. Theme-based literature units allow differentiation and are taught through literature circles, whole group study, and individual analysis. Written expression focuses on expository and persuasive writing, and portfolios allow students to reflect on, measure, and celebrate personal growth. Research and technology are infused within the studies of literature and writing.

Our mathematics curriculum focuses on developing students who are able to problem solve, reason, communicate and make connections mathematically. Students learn through activities that explore the meaning and rationale for mathematical concepts rather than the rote learning of rules and procedures. Manipulatives and hands-on materials are used to demonstrate concretely the abstract concepts that are introduced in the curriculum. All math classes at RHB are heterogeneously grouped and instructional strategies are differentiated and based on pre-assessment and other assessment data.

Science concepts are introduced through observation, investigation, experimentation, research, and class discussions. Students are challenged with inquiry-based instruction, exploratory and cooperative activities, and labs designed to help students develop their skills in scientific process in science class. Through this hands-on, minds-on approach, students grasp concepts and develop skills that will give them a foundation for future learning and a love of science. A department common assessment is given at the end of each unit of study across the grade level.

Social studies classes are designed to emphasize essential questions that form the basis for each unit. Instructional practices include guiding students to understand their world and history through simulations and creative projects. The social studies department at RHB integrates content with citizenship and helps students understand the connections between an active citizenry and global events.

The core of the Spanish program at RHB is based on Total Physical Response through Storytelling (TPRS), which includes the use of gestures, games, songs, pictures, and art work as a medium for learning a world language. Through mini stories and kinesthetic activities, students are immersed in speaking, reading, writing, listening, and acting in Spanish. Students at RHB attend Spanish class on a daily basis.

Fifth grade is the first time Madison students have access to a school counselor and receive direct instruction in a developmental guidance curriculum. During their two years at RHB, students participate in a program focused on the three standard areas defined by the American and the Connecticut School Counseling

Associations: Academic, Career, and Personal/Social. Our guidance curriculum is developmental and sequential from grades 5 through 12.

Instrumental music instruction begins in fifth grade and all grade 5 students participate in one of the three electives – band, orchestra, or chorus. In performing arts, students learn the fundamentals of proper technique, sound production, notation, and ensemble participation within a framework, encouraging individualized progress. In sixth grade, all students have the opportunity to select theatre as an alternate performing arts elective.

The district's theatre arts program begins at RHB and teaches students theatrical skills through acting games and improvisation. The fifth grade program introduces all students to the basics of acting, focusing on vocal and physical techniques, space and character development, action and objective. To further their studies, sixth graders use Greek Mythology to learn more acting basics, create and direct mini-plays, develop and sustain characters, write and perform monologues, and act in a play performed for parents and peers.

The physical education (PE) program focuses on wellness and healthy lifestyles. In fifth grade, students have PE class every day while sixth grade students have PE every other day. PE teachers engage students in personal goal setting, delivering instruction that is differentiated and allows each student to achieve his/her personal best. Emphasis is placed on skill, warm-up activities, leadership, and class participation.

In visual arts, students participate in lessons designed to encourage divergent thinking as a means to develop problem solving capabilities. Included in the art experience are art production opportunities, the study of art as an essential cultural component, and the building of societal tolerance. Additionally, our students continually self assess and they make changes to their projects based on their reflections. These skills have been proven to be transferable to all aspects of the educational experience.

2b. **(Secondary Schools) English:**
(This question is for secondary schools only)

At RHB, reading is more than ability, it is the gateway to understanding the world and a manner of communicating across all venues. Our English curriculum aims to assist students in becoming life-long lovers of literature. Our teachers encourage students to apply higher-order thinking skills throughout all areas using reading comprehension, analytical thinking, real-life application, and expressive language. Our goal is for each student to become an avid reader, perceptive writer, and resourceful thinker. Reading is a fundamental component of the learning process and it is the core of all subjects at RHB.

Themes throughout the curriculum include conflict/resolution, struggles, written expression, relationships, journey through adolescence, persuasive and expository writing, and short stories. As part of the standards-based curriculum, teachers use a variety of teaching methods while applying differentiated instruction, extension activities, small group discussions, reading response journals, literature circles, partner work, and open-ended responses. The curriculum is dynamic; it is continuously reassessed and teaching methods are redesigned and evaluated to address students' specific areas of need.

Teachers draw from an ample supply of literature to provide students with novel choice and to apply their extensive knowledge to design appropriate, differentiated, and meaningful instruction. Teachers utilize data collaboratively to plan and create cross-team and cross-curricular projects designed to meet the needs of the wide variety of our students' learning styles. Struggling readers receive additional reading instruction from a certified reading specialist through scientifically research-based programs and reading strategy application dependent on their specific area of need. Our continuous data analysis and progress monitoring ensure tailored instruction to meet both our students' individualized needs and to track student growth. Together, we strive for all of our students to reach their goals as readers.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Citing the importance of technology in the twenty first century, it is the goal at RHB to integrate beneficial, current technologies into daily life. Fundamentally, we prepare our students to be active, global contributors. This goal implies a thorough understanding of the continually evolving technology intermingled with threads of modern life. We are especially cognizant of the need to expose our students to technology as a tool, not a study. At RHB, technology is not just an isolated subject, but rather an infusion into our curricula, a means, not an end. As a result, our students appreciate it as a critical component of successful communication in a rapidly changing world. Additionally, technology is used as a valuable research and design resource, and students are taught to use technology within various subject areas.

The district and school provide software support training for teachers to build skills in integrating technology with instruction and to use technology to track, store, and analyze student data. This training also allows teachers to make connections with students, other staff, and resource specialists. This year, new software enables our school to link with other district school offices through fiber-optic cables, use of the internet for curriculum information-sharing, and for delivering alerts to parents. Additionally, RHB benefits from a part-time certified teacher in the role of Instructional Technology Specialist to support the integration of technology into instruction.

RHB is equipped with three stationary computer labs and two mobile laptop labs allowing students expansive technological access. Smartboards are available for classrooms and teachers use this technology to enhance the curriculum. Teachers use the RHB website to keep students and parents apprised of ongoing activities and assignments.

The school library serves all students and teachers with web-based automation software, allowing anyone to search the library collection from anywhere in the school or home. Through the library media center, the extensive print collection is supplemented by software and web-based applications to support curriculum and students' needs.

Technology is used as a presentation tool, for research (including subscription databases), and to modify and adapt curriculum assessments as needed. It is a vehicle for personal and creative expression, a support for struggling readers, and a communication tool between teacher and student, teacher and teacher, and teacher and home.

Ultimately, the staff and students at RHB are devoted to furthering the individual and collective educational experience. Strong skills in technology enhance learning for our students, inspiring them to be passionate, life-long, global learners.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

The staff at RHB is dedicated to achieving state and national education standards through a variety of instructional methods. In order to reach all students, regardless of level and ability, teachers use benchmarks, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), CMT results, and pre-tests to determine the current state of students' background knowledge. Once equipped with that information, teachers create lessons that address the specific needs within each class. Formative assessments allow teachers to reflect on student learning and progress.

Students can be seen working individually, in small groups, as a whole-class, or with partners. Grouping is done according to skill and strategy levels so that students receive the appropriate targeted instruction. Active learning through hands-on lessons and simulations helps reinforce deep content knowledge. Students participate in mock elections and explore living organisms in our nationally certified Wildlife Habitat and Outdoor Classroom called the POND (Providing Outdoor Nature Discoveries) Project.

In addition to in-class grouping, teachers differentiate assignments and assessments. Students are provided choices in classes - whether choosing a novel in language arts, selecting from a menu of math challenges, or writing a report in social studies, RHB staff acknowledges that choice leads to empowerment and motivation for students.

In order to address the learning needs of all, co-teaching is practiced in math and language arts classes. Special education and general education staff members meet to discuss accommodations and modifications beneficial for all learners. Common planning time permits these teachers to prepare collaborative lessons that deliver content in a model that achieves positive outcomes for all.

5. **Professional Development:**

Professional development at RHB is timely, relevant, and useful with a design to encourage professional relationships, increase content knowledge, and improve student learning. Each year, teachers create individual goals that focus on learning and student achievement. These goals, linked to school and district goals, are developed by teachers and administrators in a collaborative planning meeting. Because of the tight alignment between school and individual goals, RHB school improvement goals become the effort of all.

Teachers meet daily as a team, weekly with departments, and monthly as a whole staff. To further support student learning, co-teaching, class observations by colleagues, and sharing ideas are standard practice at RHB. Professional development occurs throughout the year in classrooms, at the district level, at national seminars and conferences, but most importantly, at the building level.

Our teachers regularly attend seminars sponsored by the New England League of Middle Schools and recently attended a workshop presented by Rick Wormeli on *Differentiated Instruction and Grading*. Our monthly staff meetings have provided additional professional development on topics such as *Behavioral Intervention Models*, *Meeting the Needs of Students with Spectrum Disorders*, and *Web 2.0 Tools for the Classroom*. Our staff belongs to professional associations such as Connecticut Organization for Language Teachers, National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, Associated Teachers of Mathematics in Connecticut, and Connecticut Reading Association. These affiliations contribute to our increased student achievement and the delivery of instruction.

Professional development and training is also provided for para-professionals. Para-professionals meet with reading and math specialists, the school counselor, school psychologist, and social worker to hone skills in addressing the needs of the population they serve. They also collaborate with classroom teachers to gain deeper understanding of the content material, methodology, and other topics that may impact student performance.

Regardless of the venue, all professional development opportunities are designed to have a positive impact on student learning.

6. **School Leadership:**

The leadership structure at RHB is collaborative and shared. The principal and assistant principal work in partnership with several constituencies to provide programming that supports continued student achievement. The administrators build consensus, and although RHB operates with interdisciplinary teams, there are no team leaders. Because of this design, all teachers assume leadership roles, participating in student placement, data analysis, material allocation, and curriculum planning. Release time among and across departments gives colleagues the opportunity to observe and learn from one another.

The School Resource Team, a voluntary committee, serves as a leadership council for the school; the school principal facilitates the meetings and works with faculty to develop and address school goals. Curriculum

work and teacher evaluation are shared with Program Coordinators in the areas of special education, science, math, social studies and language arts. These teacher/leaders work as liaisons to administration to support and enhance initiatives and programs at RHB. Leadership at RHB is not an attribute shared only among adults. Student leaders are an integral part to the positive climate of our school. Student Council representatives and any student with initiative and vision are encouraged to propose and implement plans that support RHB's mission and school theme.

Inherent to the success of the multiple tiers of leadership at RHB is communication. The schedule design promotes collaboration and communication through inclusion of daily team time, weekly grade level department time, monthly staff meetings, and full department meetings. School goals are set at the beginning of each year and each department and individual teacher work to advance the school's vision, which is articulated by administration, but developed based on the defined needs of students, staff, and parents. Our focus on creating a culture of thinkers and risk-takers is ubiquitous. The schedule created by the assistant principal supports structures for all of our school programs and provides ample time for teachers to collaborate with colleagues and administrators.

RHB has a unique spirit. Our administration formed a Spirit Committee that helps define our school climate and culture. This group combines administrators, core teachers, related arts, support staff, paraprofessionals, and custodial staff to promote our current school theme, *Be the Change You Wish to See in the World*. Through school-wide assemblies, classroom-based projects, team-level undertakings, small group tasks, and building-based initiatives, the heart of our school beats with the passion and enthusiasm that characterize RHB.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: Generation 4 Publisher: Measurement, Inc.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	96	95	98	93	0
% Advanced	88	84	92	70	0
Number of students tested	299	294	304	321	0
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	0
Number of students alternatively assessed	7	0	1	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	54	72	83	67	0
% Advanced	46	42	67	22	0
Number of students tested	26	36	36	45	0
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	93	100	100	
% Advanced	91	93	100	100	
Number of students tested	11	14	10	10	

Notes: State testing for grade 5 did not begin until the 2005-2006 school year. Our largest "Other Subgroup" is our Asian American student population. In March 2009, the State of Connecticut piloted an alternative CMT called the MAS (Modified Assessment System). As a pilot, all students who took this alternate assessment were automatically scored as "Below Proficient," regardless of their actual score range.

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: Generation 4 Publisher: Measurement Inc.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	92	95	92	0
% Advanced	86	83	90	82	0
Number of students tested	299	293	305	321	0
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	0
Number of students alternatively assessed	10	0	1	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	38	64	75	56	0
% Advanced	38	44	61	42	0
Number of students tested	26	36	36	45	0
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	93	90	100	
% Advanced	91	93	80	100	
Number of students tested	11	14	10	10	

Notes: State testing for grade 5 did not begin until the 2005-2006 school year. Our largest "Other Subgroup" is our Asian American student population. In March 2009, the State of Connecticut piloted an alternative CMT called the MAS (Modified Assessment System). As a pilot, all students who took this alternate assessment were automatically scored as "Below Proficient," regardless of their actual score range.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: Generation 4 Publisher: Measurement, Inc

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	99	99	97	94	94
% Advanced	95	95	91	80	82
Number of students tested	296	308	331	322	305
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	0	2	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73	91	72	58	67
% Advanced	63	82	54	24	46
Number of students tested	30	33	39	41	39
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	100			
% Advanced	93	100			
Number of students tested	15	10			

Notes: CMT changed from Generation III to Generation IV in 2005-2006. Data for "Largest other subgroup" is not available since the state did not (in 2005-2006) report subgroup scores for groups smaller than 20. Our largest "Other Subgroup" is our Asian American student population. In March 2009, the State of Connecticut piloted an alternative CMT called the MAS (Modified Assessment System). As a pilot, all students who took this alternate assessment were automatically scored as "Below Proficient," regardless of their actual score range.

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: Connecticut Mastery Test

Edition/Publication Year: Generation 4 Publisher: Measurement, Inc.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Sep
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	99	96	95	91	93
% Advanced	94	92	89	80	86
Number of students tested	296	308	331	322	305
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	10	0	2	2	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	67	76	64	49	68
% Advanced	57	70	41	32	47
Number of students tested	30	33	39	41	39
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	90			
% Advanced	93	90			
Number of students tested	15	10			

Notes: CMT changed from Generation III to Generation IV in 2005-2006. Data for "Largest other subgroup" is not available since the state did not (in 2005-2006) report subgroup scores for groups smaller than 20. Our largest "Other Subgroup" is our Asian American student population. In March 2009, the State of Connecticut piloted an alternative CMT called the MAS (Modified Assessment System). As a pilot, all students who took this alternate assessment were automatically scored as "Below Proficient," regardless of their actual score range.